

# HAMPSONG FOUNDATION

*Song in Dialogue: A Learning Performance*  
Part of the *Song of America* Educator Workshop

Presented by the Hampsong Foundation

With Teachers College, Columbia University  
& Manhattan School of Music

**TEACHERS COLLEGE**  
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

**M** Manhattan  
School of Music

Saturday, April 23, 2016 | 1:30-3pm

Milbank Chapel  
Teachers College, Columbia University  
525 W. 120<sup>th</sup> St., between Broadway & Amsterdam  
New York, NY

This event will be live-streamed for free online via the Teachers College LiveStream Channel. You can find the event here:  
<http://livestream.com/teacherscollegecolumbiauniversity/Hampsong>

# Program

“Song For a Dark Girl”  
from *Only Heaven* (1997)

Composer: Ricky Ian Gordon (b. 1956)

Poet: Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

Nita Baxani, soprano  
Richard Pearson Thomas, piano

“Minstrel Man”  
from *Three Dream Portraits* (1959)

Composer: Margaret Bonds (1913-1972)

Poet: Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

Justin Austin, baritone  
Richard Pearson Thomas, piano

“I never saw a Moor”  
from *At Last, To Be Identified* (1992)

Composer: Richard Pearson Thomas (b. 1957)

Poet: Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

Catherine Swindle, soprano  
Richard Pearson Thomas, piano

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*“Song is a metaphor of the imagination; it is poetic thought encapsulated in music. Poetry is driven by the basic instinct to tell the story of existence and American poetry explores the cultural roots of our nation.”*

*–Thomas Hampson*

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**Song For a Dark Girl**  
by Langston Hughes

Way Down South in Dixie  
(Break the heart of me)  
They hung my black young lover  
To a cross roads tree.

Way Down South in Dixie  
(Bruised body high in air)  
I asked the white Lord Jesus  
What was the use of prayer.

Way Down South in Dixie  
(Break the heart of me)  
Love is a naked shadow  
On a gnarled and naked tree.

## **Minstrel Man**

by Langston Hughes

Because my mouth  
Is wide with laughter  
And my throat  
Is deep with song,  
You do not think  
I suffer after  
I have held my pain  
So long?

Because my mouth  
Is wide with laughter,  
You do not hear  
My inner cry?  
Because my feet  
Are gay with dancing,  
You do not know  
I die?

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## **I Never Saw a Moor (poem 1052)**

by Emily Dickinson

I never saw a moor,  
I never saw the sea;  
Yet know I how the heather looks,  
And what a wave must be.

I never spoke with God,  
Nor visited in heaven;  
Yet certain am I of the spot  
As if the chart were given.

**Justin Austin**, baritone, holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Manhattan School of Music and is a first year Master's degree candidate under the tutelage of Catherine Malfitano. Praised in *Opera News* as “a gentle actor and elegant musician”, winner of the 2013 Leontyne Price Competition, Mr. Austin recently performed the role of *Jake* in Gershwin's “*Porgy and Bess*” at the Landestheater Linz (Austria), and Théâtre de Genève (Switzerland). Originally from Stuttgart, Germany, Mr. Austin has performed as Adam in Hayden's *Die Schöpfung*, Sabari in Cavalli's *La Doriclea*, and as the baritone soloist in Handel's *Messiah*, Monteverdi's *Vespers*, and Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*. This season, Mr. Austin will perform in the world premiere of *Shalimar the Clown* at the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis.

**Nita Baxani**, soprano, has been dubbed “a most striking interpreter” by the New York Times. Born in Hong Kong to a Chinese mother and Indian father, Ms. Baxani has performed a wide range of art songs, oratorio, opera, and musical theater roles, including the National Tours of *Bombay Dreams* (Shaheen, Priya/us), and two tours of *The King and I*. Ms. Baxani has appeared as a soloist at The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and in numerous concerts in New York City and Europe. A proud member of the Actors' Equity Association, Ms. Baxani holds an MM in Vocal Performance from the Manhattan School of Music, a BM in Music Education, and is an avid supporter of Music and Arts Education. She is currently pursuing a Doctor of Education degree in Music and Music Education at Teachers College, Columbia University.

**Thomas Hampson** enjoys a singular international career as an opera singer, recording artist, and “ambassador of song,”

maintaining an active interest in research, education, musical outreach, and technology. The American baritone has performed in the world's most important concert halls and opera houses with many renowned singers, pianists, conductors, and orchestras. He is the founder and president of the Hampsong Foundation. <http://thomashampson.com>

Soprano **Catherine Swindle** is a second-year Master's degree candidate at Manhattan School of Music under the tutelage of Joan Patenaude-Yarnell. This season, she will perform *Il Tramonto* with the American String Quartet and *La Chauve-souris* in MSM's production of *L'enfant et les sortilèges*. She was last seen as the Countess (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in MSM's Scenes program. She also participated in artist Lee Mingwei's *Sonic Blossom* installation at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. A native of Texas, previous credits include *Die Zauberflöte* (First Lady) and *Macbeth* (Première sorcière) at MSM, various roles at Texas Tech University, as well as the role of Fiordiligi with the Ópera Nacional de Honduras in Tegucigalpa.

**Richard Pearson Thomas**, composer and pianist, has had works performed by major orchestras, opera companies, and ensembles throughout the country, and his songs have been sung in venues like Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center, as well as before the U.S. Congress by artists such as Audra McDonald. As a pianist, Mr. Thomas has concertized with singers worldwide and is a frequent collaborator with The Mirror Visions Ensemble. Currently on faculty at Teachers College, he has previously taught at Yale. He is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music and the University of Southern California, and a native of Montana.

## About the *Song of America* Curriculum Initiative

*Song of America* is the Hampsong Foundation's multi-faceted project exploring the history of American culture through classic song—poetry set to music. *Song of America* offers high-quality online resources, including a 13-part radio series and the *Song of America* database, a catalogue of information and supplementary materials on American composers, poets, and songs, all free of cost.

We invite humanities educators at all levels to listen to these programs online and to explore how one or all of them could enhance teaching and learning in their classrooms. We look forward to working with teachers, administrators, and curriculum and resource specialists to develop strategies to integrate these materials into language arts, history, civics, and other humanities classes, using classic song as the gateway for a richer knowledge of the cultures, languages, peoples, and events that have shaped American life.

## About the Hampsong Foundation

*Song of America* is a project of the Hampsong Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 2003 by distinguished American baritone Thomas Hampsong with the mission of creating high-quality and accessible materials that explore the world of classic song as a prism for understanding culture and history.

**H A M P S O N G**  
F O U N D A T I O N

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